So I say to you, I'm glad you're here. I appreciate the money that you've spent to contribute to the party. It will be well used to get votes out on election day. But every one of you as a citizen can go out and talk to your friends and neighbors and co-workers and people you see in every building you go in of any kind and tell them what the stakes are, why they should vote for Buddy MacKay for Congress, why they should vote at all—for Governor, why they should vote at all.

I'm so sick and tired of—all the experts say, ''Well, they know the vote will be down.'' The vote won't be down if people think it's in their interest to show up if they think it's in their interest to show up.

And I'm telling you, our country has never had a better opportunity to build a world for the 21st century that's safer and more prosperous for our children. But it will only happen if we don't snooze away these good times, if we plan and act for the future.

The last thing I want to say is, when you go home tonight, think about the children that are the face and future of Florida and our country, increasingly diverse, from different racial and ethnic and religious and cultural backgrounds, all coming here because they believe there's some fabulous, unique promise and hope in our country. Before you go to bed tonight just ask yourself: Who do you really believe is more likely to go to bed every night as Governor thinking about those kids? Who do you think is more likely to wake up every day thinking about those kids? And who do you think is more likely to make decisions, the popular decisions and the unpopular decisions, that will give those kids a chance to grow up in one America?

That's why people ought to vote in November. That's why they ought to vote for Buddy MacKay. And that's why they ought to support our agenda for America's future. You can make sure it happens, and I hope you will.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 p.m. in the Granada Ballroom at the Biltmore Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gubernatorial candidate Lt. Gov. Buddy MacKay of Florida, and his wife, Anne; Daryl Jones, State senator; and Mitch Ceasar, chair, Florida Democratic Party.

Remarks on Presentation of the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science, Math, and Engineering Mentoring

September 10, 1998

Thank you very much. I saw Representative Brown take my speech off the podium—[*laughter*]—and I thought that that was a rather extreme measure to take to demonstrate that he still knows much more about this subject than I do. [*Laughter*]

Let me thank all of you for coming and congratulate the awardees. I thank Secretary Slater and Secretary Riley for their support of this endeavor. I want to thank Neal Lane for agreeing to become the President's Science Adviser; and Dr. Rita Colwell for heading the NSF. When they were clapping for her, I didn't realize that she was sort of the poster woman of achievement for women in science. [*Laughter*] But I couldn't think of a better one.

I would like to say one very serious thing about George Brown. Many jokes have been made over the years about my affinity for issues that don't exactly grip the public consciousness from morning until night every day, but I think the public is more interested in science and technology than ever before and understands more clearly its role than ever before. And I believe it's important to acknowledge that in the last generation, the Member of Congress most responsible for our doing everything we've done right has been George Brown of California. And I thank you for that.

Let me say, I'm quite well aware that we're starting a little late today, and I regret that, but I was in an extended meeting with Senators from my own party, part of this process I'm going through of talking to people with whom I work and with whom I must work in your behalf to ask for their understanding, their forgiveness, and their commitment, not to let the events of the moment in Washington deter us from doing the people's work here and building the future of this country. And I can't think of a better moment really or subject for us to make that larger point.

All of you know how rapidly the world is changing. Now, everyday citizens see it when they watch the gyrations of the stock market

up and down. I've been in Maryland and Florida the last couple of days, mostly in schools and with teachers and PTA leaders, and then at a couple of political events where regular business people would come up to me and say it truly is amazing to them how much events here are affected by events beyond our borders and how much people want us here to be strong, to be leading, to have a genuine and deep commitment to preparing for the future. There is no better example of that than the work that you do.

So the primary purpose of this event is for all of us—and especially me—to congratulate the President's Awardees for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring, and to thank you for doing this, because not only those whom you mentor but those whom they touch will have a broader and more accurate worldview for the future. That will make our country a better place.

We are living in a truly remarkable time, driven in no small measure by the revolutions in science and technology. Our economy depends on it more and more, and the maintenance of our leadership depends upon our deepening commitment to it more and more. Yet statistics show that in science, engineering, and mathematics, minorities, women, and people with disabilities are still grossly under-represented, even though we are becoming an ever more diverse society.

I've just really got this on my mind because I've been in a grade school in Maryland and a grade school in Orlando, Florida, this week, and I was looking at those kids. And it is hard to imagine an American future that works without those kids properly represented in the ranks of science and technology, without those kids making a profound commitment to mathematics, without those young people believing that if they have an interest there, they can pursue it to the nth degree.

And the truth is—you know, Rita talked about being discouraged just having people say they shouldn't waste scholarships on women; you hear similar stories from our first women astronauts. You hear similar stories from the first pioneers who broke racial and other barriers. But the truth is, even though we need our heroes and our trailblazers, that's no way to run a society. And people sooner or later just have to get over it. They have to get over it and open—[*applause*].

Now, look at this. Let me just read you this. The American Association for the Advancement of Sciences shows that between 1996 and 1997, 20 percent fewer African-Americans and 18.2 percent fewer Hispanic-American young people enrolled in graduate programs in science and engineering.

Judy Winston is here, who has done such a marvelous job of carrying our President's initiative on race. One of the things that I launched that initiative on race to do was to highlight developments like this, to talk about these disparities, to talk about what we could do about them. If we're serious about giving every American the chance to reach his or her dreams and building a work force for the global economy that reflects our national diversity and our global ties, if we're serious about having the finest scientists, mathematicians, and engineers in the world, we can't leave anybody behind.

Now, I've been working very hard to make sure that we have more uniform, high-quality, world-class public education in every school in America, that the children, without regard to their race or their income or the region of the country in which they live or the income of the neighborhood in which they live, will all have access to the kind of preparatory education they need.

And we work very hard—we've opened the doors of college wider than ever before in history with the HOPE scholarships, with the tax credits for all 4 years of college and graduate schools, with dramatic increases in Pell grants and work-study programs, with the improvements in the student loan programs. But we have to do more if we are going to address this problem. All that's been done, and the problem you're here to celebrate your contribution to solving is in many places and in many ways getting worse. And we have to face that because it is not good for America.

We started an initiative that I hope will be funded in this Congress that I think could really help called the high hopes initiative, to provide mentors for disadvantaged middle school students and be able to tell these kids when they're in middle school, ''You will be able to go on to college if you do well, and

here's how much money you can get and here's what you can do with it.''

But still, once these young people get to college, if they come from backgrounds where there is almost no record of achievement in the areas you represent, they need mentors. They need people who can guide them through all these decisions that have to be made about what you're going to major in and what else you take. I'm becoming an expert in that. [*Laughter*] They need people who can guide them into the right kinds of graduate programs. They need people who can support them through graduate work and help them to find a successful career.

Now, when we started these awards in 1996, we did it to encourage more scientists, engineers, and mathematicians to become mentors, and to encourage more minorities, women, and young people with disabilities to seek careers in science and math and technological fields. Today I want to announce a new step in this area. The Federal Government supports the work, literally, of tens of thousands of scientists and engineers at national labs and universities all across the country. If it were up to George and me, we'd support the work of many more. But these are tens of thousands of potential mentors working for our country through your tax dollar investments.

Today I'm directing the National Science and Technology Council to report back to me in 6 months with comprehensive recommendations about how we can use this fabulous resource to generate more mentors, to touch more kids, in a way that will have a huge positive impact on this problem we're trying to attack.

If every scientist and engineer who is doing something as a direct result of Federal investment were to become a committed, dedicated mentor, think what it would mean: A teenager from rural Tennessee reaching for the stars as a NASA technician; an inner-city child joining a clinical team that discovers a cure for cancer at the nearest teaching hospital; a first-generation American helping to build the next generation of the Internet.

Henry Adams once said that teachers affect eternity because they can never tell where their influence stops. I believe the same can be said about mentors. And I thank you, each and every one of you, for what you have done to help our country reach its full potential.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Memorandum on Diversity in the Scientific and Technical Work Force

September 10, 1998

Memorandum for the National Science and Technology Council

Subject: Achieving Greater Diversity Throughout the U.S. Scientific and Technical Work Force

The world admires the American higher education system for its excellence in advanced training in science and engineering. Maintaining leadership across the frontiers of science and producing the finest scientists and engineers for the 21st century are principal goals of my Administration's science and technology policies. The work of individuals and organizations to inspire and mentor young people and offer role models is crucial to achieving these goals. To recognize this, I established the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring in 1996. This annual award honors individuals and organizations for outstanding mentoring efforts that have encouraged significant numbers of individuals from groups under-represented in science, mathematics, and engineering to succeed in these fields.

As we work to develop the finest scientists and engineers for the 21st century, our human resources policies must address the composition of our science and engineering work force. Achieving diversity throughout the ranks of the scientific and technical work force presents a formidable challenge. The number of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities who have careers in science and engineering remains low. In every year of this decade, there have been far too few minorities awarded degrees in science or engineering, and the trend in minority admissions and degree awards is not encouraging.